



Grandpa's Old Time Christmas

by CHARLES FREDERICK WADSWORTH
Decorations by Magnus G. Kettner

GRANDPA told me all about the old-time Christmases he had. When he was but six or eight, and just a teenie-weenie lad; Said they didn't have much candy, and not very many toys, But I bet he had a good time with the little girls and boys. Christmas Eve he'd hang his stocking by the old-time chimney place, Then he'd scamper up the stairway, crawl in bed and hide his face, For he knew Old Santa wouldn't bring his reindeer o'er the snow If a little boy could see him—everybody told him so.

THEN next morning how he'd hurry down to see the things he had. Things old Santa Claus had brought him, just to make a wee boy glad! But in those days Santa didn't carry in his shoulder pack Nice toys like my little train that runs along a little track; Maybe there would be a little sheep on wheels and painted white, Maybe just a little tin bank that would hold his pennies tight, And a little pair of mittens, and a pretty "nubia," too, That would keep him warm and cozy when the winds of winter blew.

AND they'd have a family dinner (all the relatives would meet, Uncles, aunts, and lots of cousins), with such good things there to eat. In the afternoon were walnuts, hickory nuts, and apples red, And the kids would wrap up warm and slide down hill on grandpa's sled. And there was the old melodeon that was played by Auntie Sue— Little pedals worked the bellows which was old and leaky too; "Shall We Gather at the River?" they would sing, and "Happy Day," And they'd bow their heads in silence while my grandpa's pa would pray.

THEN he'd get the children 'round him so that all of them could hear, And he'd tell of Jesus' birth day that we celebrate each year— Tell the story of the Wise Men, and the Star that led them on, How they found Him in the manger, God's own well-beloved Son. Oh, how grandpa's eyes would sparkle as he told of long ago, When his hair was curly golden, though it now is white as snow! When he'd finished, then he told me how to make my Christmas best: "Let your heart be filled with love, and that will outweigh all the rest."

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